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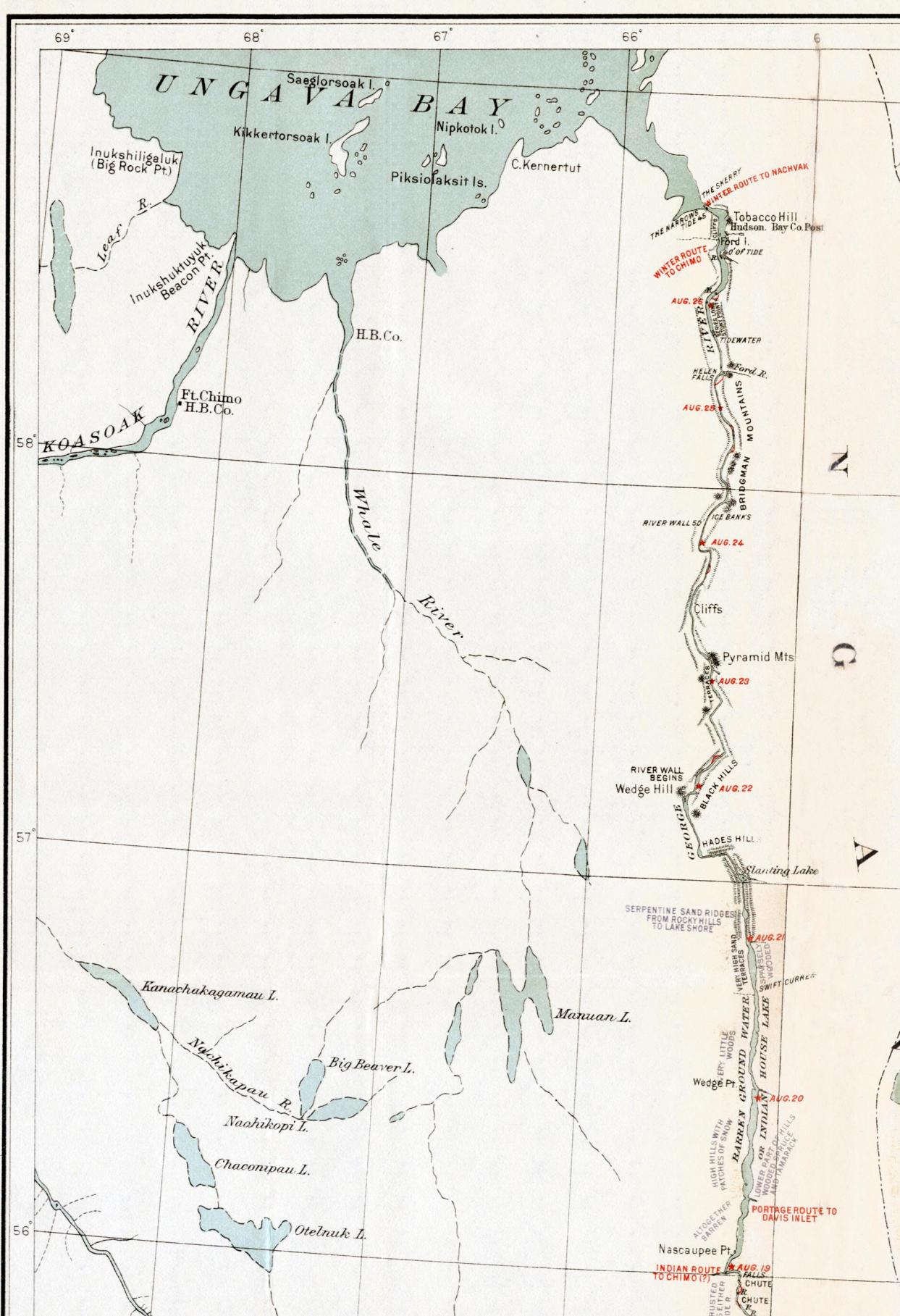
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NASCAUPEE AND GEORGE RIVERS AS THEY APPEARED ON MAPS IN 1905  
(FROM STEILER'S HAND-ATLAS)

SCALE: 1:7,500,000 or 118.8 statute miles to an inch

0 25 50 75 100 miles

## MAP OF EASTERN LABRADOR

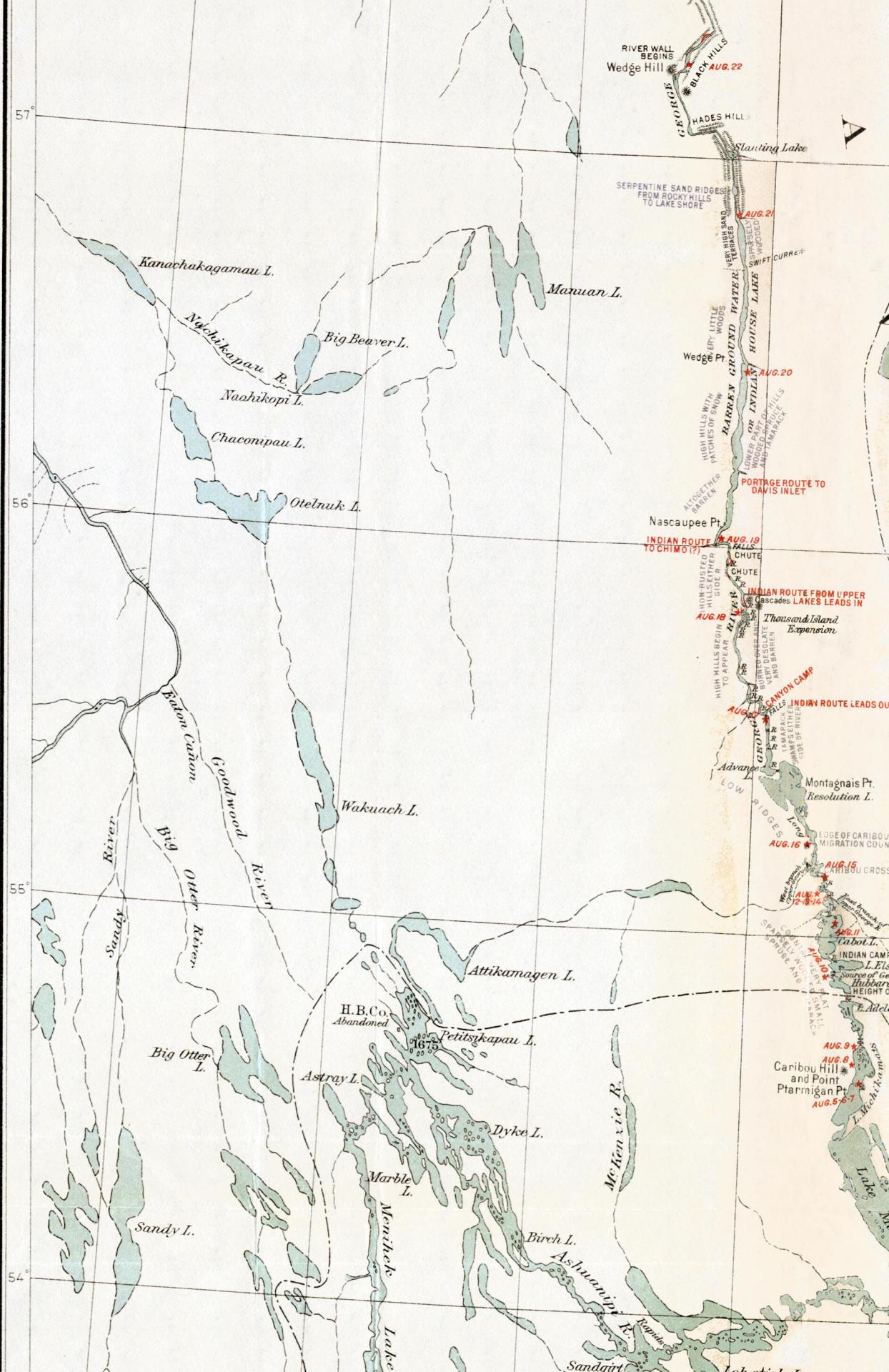
Showing Grand Lake and the courses of the Nascaupee and  
George Rivers as surveyed and mapped,  
June 27 to August 27, 1905

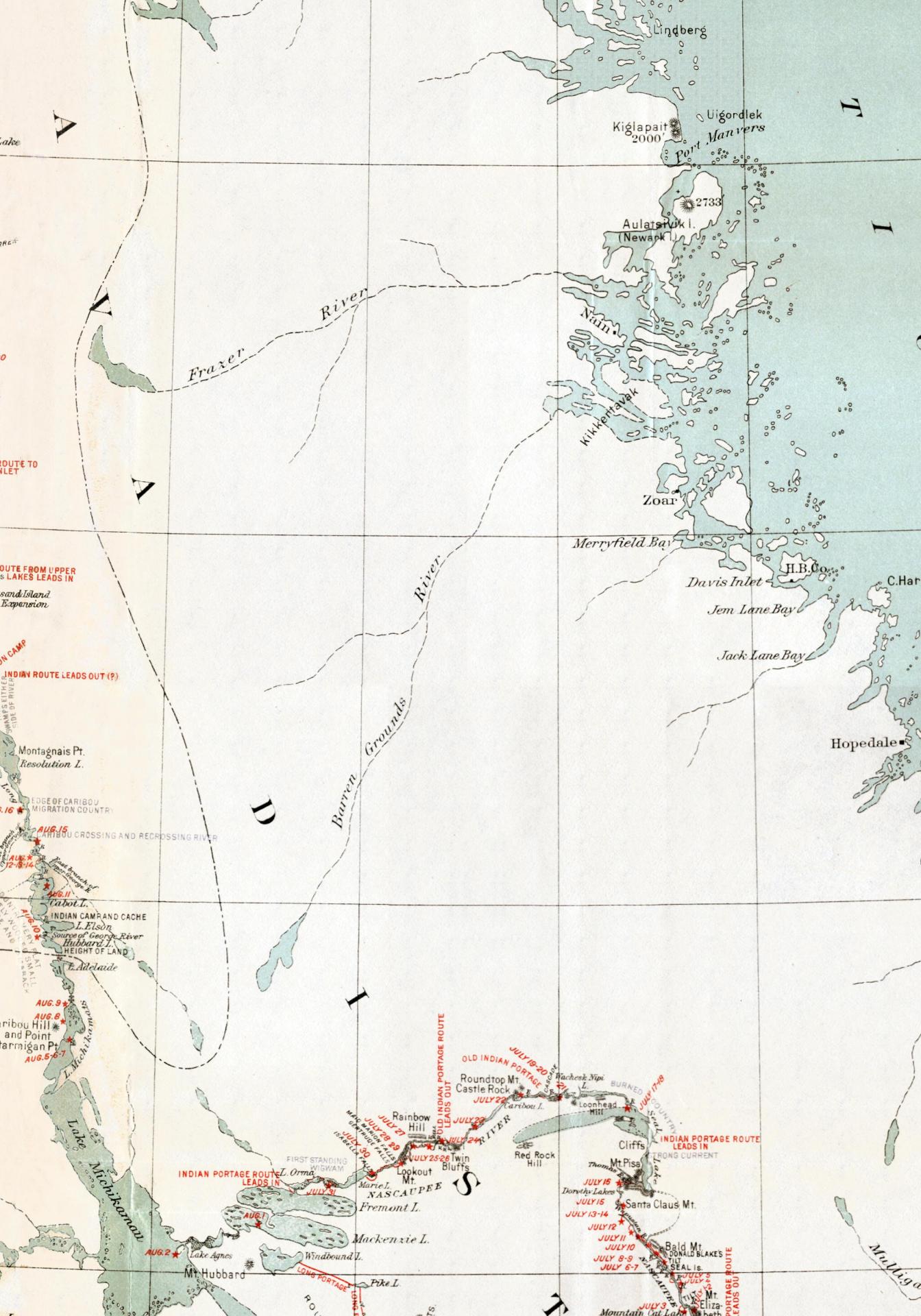
BY  
MRS. LEONIDAS HUBBARD, Jr.

WITH THE

### SUSAN AND BIG RIVERS

Showing the route of Mr. Leonidas Hubbard, Jr.  
in the Summer of 1903





NASCAUPEE AND GEORGE RIVERS AS THEY APPEARED ON MAPS IN 1905  
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SCALE: 1:7,500,000 or 118.3 statute miles to an inch

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MRS. LEONIDAS HUBBARD, Jr.  
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in the Summer of 1903

55°

SCALE: 1:1,584,000 or 25 statute miles to an inch  
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*Mrs. Hubbard's journey was made in canoes except at the land portages indicated*

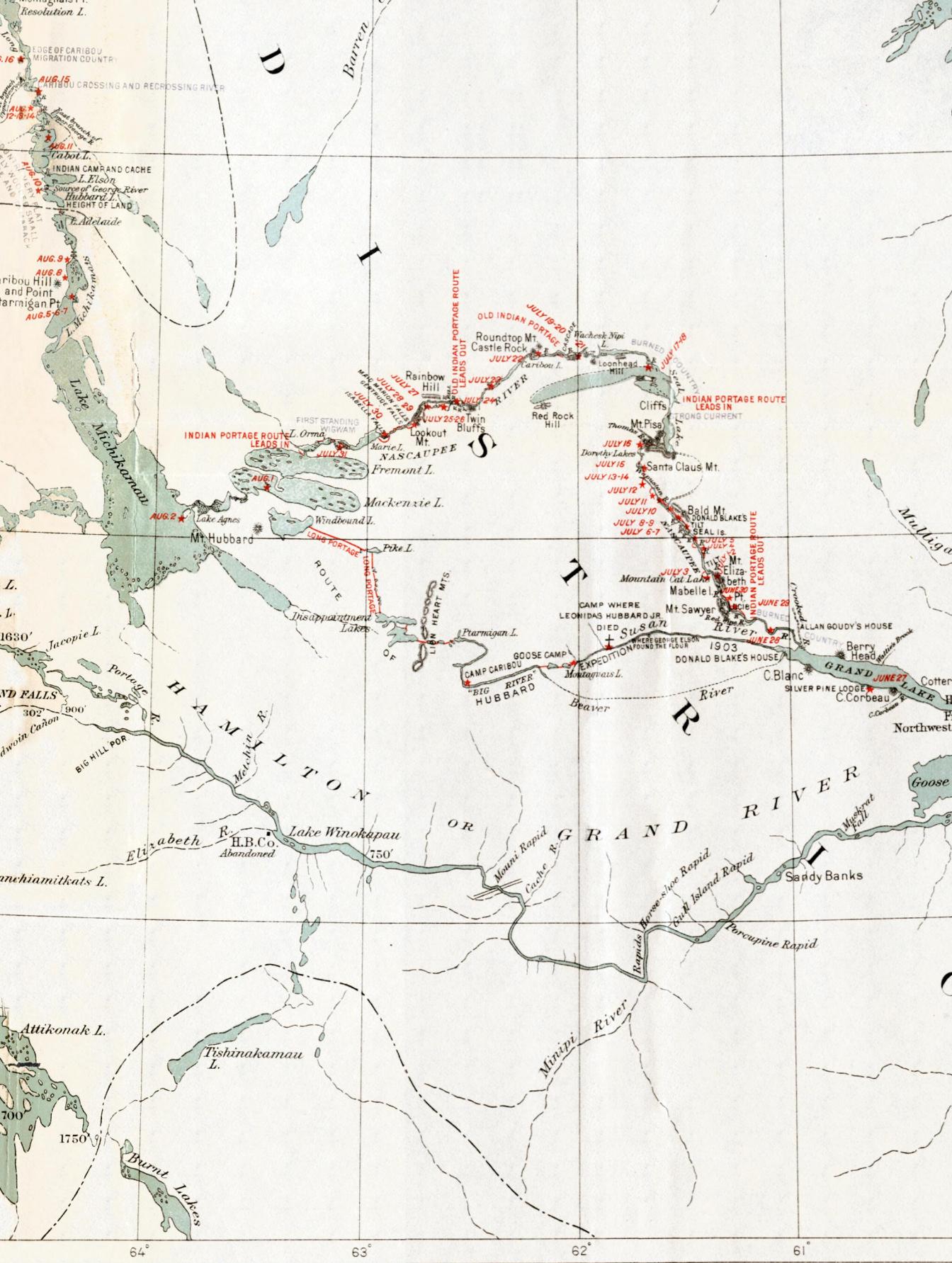
CAMPS, - \*

## PORTAGES,

### RAPIDS, - R









# BULLETIN

OF THE  
AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

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**Vol. XXXVIII**

**1906.**

**No. 9**

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LABRADOR, FROM LAKE MELVILLE TO UNGAVA BAY.

BY

MRS. LEONIDAS HUBBARD, JR.

In the northeastern portion of the Dominion of Canada is the great Labrador Peninsula, which, though first to be discovered, is of all the regions of North America the last and least explored. North of the fifty-fourth parallel it is nine hundred miles in extent from Hudson Bay on the west to the Atlantic Ocean on the east, and between its southern boundary, the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and its extreme northern point at Hudson Straits lie eight hundred miles of almost unbroken wilderness. The peninsula is estimated to contain 511,000 square miles, its interior being a vast elevated, rocky, irregular plateau, in places standing well out to the coast and cut by valleys down which great rivers carry to the sea the waters of its myriads of lakes and streams.

Knowledge of the interior of the peninsula was until the sixties confined to that obtained by the agents of the various Hudson's Bay Company's posts established at long intervals on the coast and in the interior; but, in accordance with the policy of the Company, their findings were not recorded. One notable exception to this rule was that of John McLean, to whom falls the honour of being the discoverer of the Grand Falls of the Hamilton River. In 1838, 1841, and 1842 he crossed and recrossed the country lying between Lake Melville and Ungava Bay; but the accounts of these journeys which appear in his "Twenty Five Years in the Hudson Bay Territory" are very incomplete, and he left no maps.

In 1862, Henry Yule Hind made his survey of the Moise River. In 1887, Dr. R. F. Holmes, an English traveller, made an attempt to reach the Grand Falls of the Hamilton, two hundred and fifty miles

above the mouth of the river, but was obliged to return without accomplishing his purpose, his crew proving inefficient and his outfit inadequate. In 1892 two expeditions from the United States reached the Grand Falls—one from Bowdoin College under Messrs. Carey and Cole, and the other under Mr. Henry G. Bryant, recently President of the Philadelphia Geographical Society.

But the great Labrador explorer is Mr. A. P. Low, Director of the Geological Survey of Canada. More than that of all others, his work has tended to dispel the darkness of mystery so long shadowing the interior of the great peninsula. Yet Mr. Low's work, which extended over a period of ten years, and which is set forth in the reports of the Geological Survey of Canada, had left the northeastern portion, lying between Lake Melville and Ungava Bay, still virgin field for the explorer, where remained two large rivers to be traversed and mapped.

On the 15th of July, 1903, Leonidas Hubbard, Jr., my husband, with two companions, set out from Northwest River Post, near the head of Lake Melville, for a canoe trip into the interior, which he hoped would not only afford him an interesting wilderness experience but also an opportunity to explore and map one, and perhaps both, of these rivers, the Northwest River draining Lake Michikamau to Lake Melville, and the George River draining the northern slope of the plateau to Ungava Bay.

Misled by information obtained at the post, which corresponded with the indications of the map he carried, that of the Geological Survey of Canada, Mr. Hubbard took the Susan River, which enters Grand Lake at its upper extremity, instead of the larger river draining Lake Michikamau and entering Grand Lake at the head of a bay five miles from its western end. The Susan River led them, not by an open waterway to Lake Michikamau, but up to the edge of the plateau, where they became lost in the maze of its lakes. When within sight of the great lake the party was forced to begin a retreat which Mr. Hubbard did not survive to complete, and the object of his expedition was not achieved.

Nevertheless, in utter physical weakness, utter loneliness, in the face of defeat and death, he yet wrote that final record of his life, so triumphantly characteristic, which turned his defeat to a victory immeasurably higher and more beautiful than the success of his exploring venture could ever have been accounted, and thus was compassed the higher purpose of his life.

That his lesser purpose might not remain unaccomplished, I myself in 1905 undertook the conduct of the second Hubbard Ex-

FIG. 1.—EMERGING FROM THE HILLS TO CROSS THE SAND PLAIN,  
UPPER NASCAUPEE.

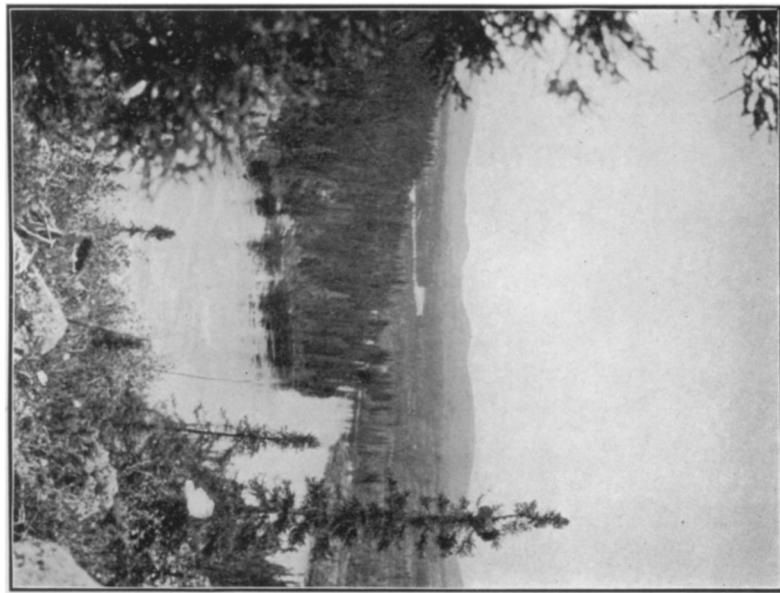
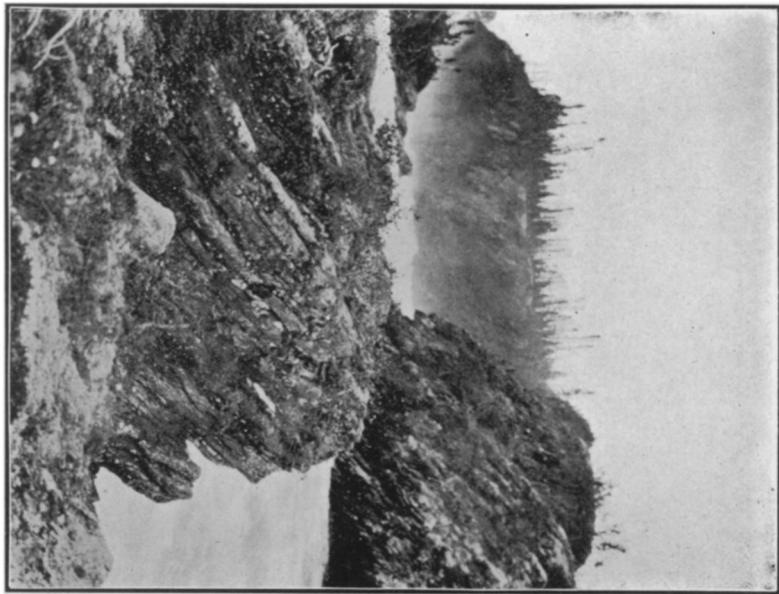


FIG. 2.—GORGE BELOW MAID MARION FALLS.



pedition, and, with the advantage of the information and experience obtained by the first, a larger crew and a three weeks' earlier start, successfully completed the work undertaken two years before. The map which this article is intended to accompany sets forth the work I was able to accomplish. It does not claim to be other than purely pioneer work. I had with me a surveyor's compass and a sextant and artificial horizon. I took no observations for longitude, but obtained a few for latitude, which served as guiding points in making my map. Owing to the fact that I depended on water instead of taking mercury with me for my artificial horizon, a number of observations were lost because of the ease with which the surface of the water was disturbed and the gathering of moisture on the glass. The controlling points of the journey were already astronomically fixed.\* The shores of the lakes were not explored, but outlined as they appeared from the canoe or from the top of a hill.

The map of the route of the first Hubbard Expedition is from one drawn for me by George Elson, with the few observations for latitude recorded by Mr. Hubbard in his diary as guiding points. Mr. Hubbard's note-book, containing his maps and other records, I have not had access to.

My expedition left Northwest River Post 3.30 P.M., June 27th. I had two canoes and four guides, chief among whom was George Elson, who had loyally served Mr. Hubbard in 1903, and who had, with a rare skill and a rarer devotion, recovered Mr. Hubbard's body, his records, and his photographic material from the interior, in the depth of the following winter. My supply of provisions totalled 750 lb., the complete outfit weighing 1,000 lb. July 17th found us at the head of Seal Lake. August 2nd we made our first camp on Lake Michikamau. August 10th we arrived at the Height of Land, and in seventeen days made the run down the George River to the post at Ungava, arriving there at 11.20 A.M., August 27th.

The Nascaupee River may be said to have its origin in Lat.  $54^{\circ} 50'$  and W. Long.  $64^{\circ} 30'$ , at the edge of the Height of Land, its course from this point to the ocean describing a somewhat awkward-looking letter W. The distance in a straight line to its discharge into Lake Melville is two hundred miles, but following the windings of its course is about three hundred miles. From the Height of Land a series of lake expansions stretches nearly one hundred miles east of south, the last and largest being Lake Michikamau, of all the lakes of the interior second only to Mistassini in size. It is sixty

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\* Northwest River Post, Lake Michikamau and its outlet, and the mouth of the George River.

miles long and twenty-five miles in width at its widest. The Nascaupee River issues from the lake to the east a few miles north of Lat.  $54^{\circ}$ . The outlet is partly concealed by a large island to the south, and the river flows from the lake round a low wooded point, breaking into rapids as it spreads about the islands in the upper end of Lake Agnes. Its course is now northeast to Seal Lake, the first fifty miles being through the great plain of the lakes, where MacKenzie and Fremont are its largest expansions.

Here a thousand lakes spread over the country, separated from Lake Michikamau by a low ridge extending northward along its eastern shore. Across the plain from east to west stretches a succession of low wooded ridges, seeming to become higher and more barren in the north. The wood growth is of small spruce and larch, unrelieved by the touch of white birch and poplar found in plenty on the lower levels, and the ridges extend eastward to the long portage and beyond, and are separated from the great irregular hills which occupy the country west of Seal Lake by a broad sand plain. To the south of the lakes the country is more rugged and barren, big rocky hills standing out towards Lake Michikamau.

At the foot of Lake Marie the river descends from the plain at Isabella Falls, a system of falls and rapids and chutes extending for more than a mile, where the water rushes over ledges, round rocky islands and through miniature cañons, an abrupt right angle bend midway of the descent adding to the wildness and picturesque beauty of the scene. The rock, which is Laurentian, is rich red brown, almost purple in colour, and its perpendicular surfaces are patched with a close grey-green moss and a variety the colour of vermillion. Islands and shores are wooded, and the dark spruces stand out in strong relief against the white of the reindeer moss. From this point eastward to beyond our long portage, which is as far as the wooded country extends, there is a perceptible difference in the size of the trees, those in the sheltered river valley attaining a larger growth than those on the plain above.

For the next seven miles the river drops rapidly. Two wild and impassable rapids occur before reaching Gertrude Falls, where the river takes a direct drop of about sixty feet, flowing on in almost continuous rapids to the next drop at Maid Marion Falls. Here it descends fifty feet into a narrow channel cut out in the gneiss and schists of the Laurentian, emerging from the hills ten miles below to a terraced sand plain four miles wide. Beyond this it passes through the sea of hills west of Seal Lake. The main drop in this part of its course takes place in a fall of a few feet a short

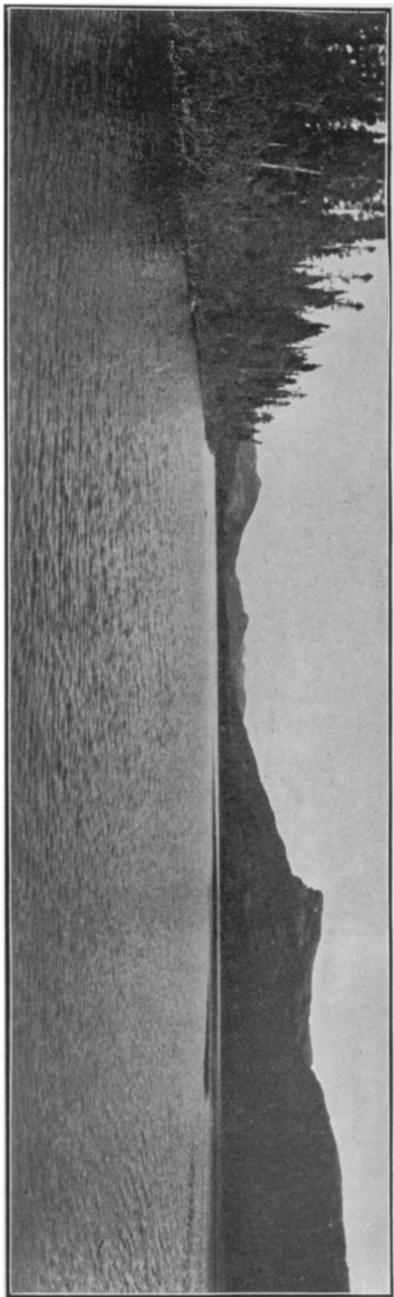


FIG. 3.—WHERE THE NASCAUPEE LEAVES SEAL LAKE.

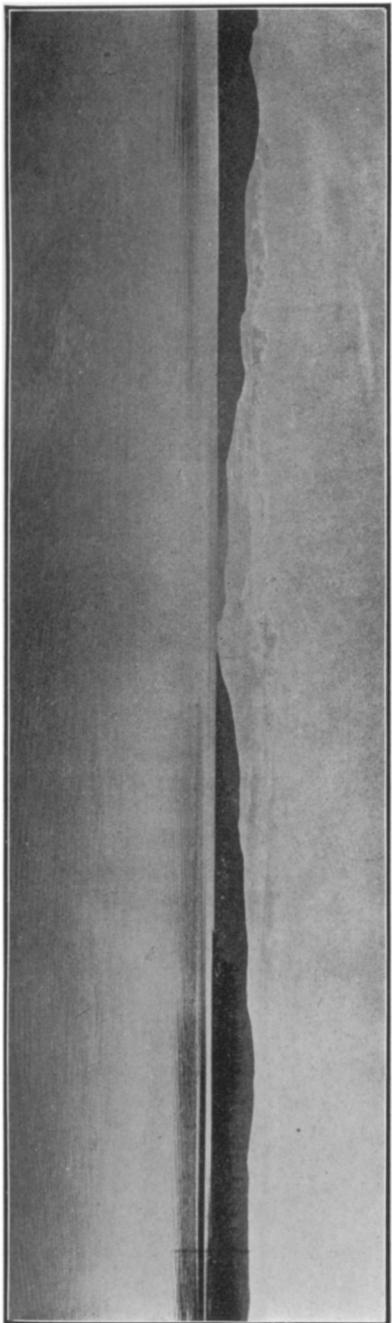


FIG. 5.—GRAND LAKE. CAPE CORBEAU 12 MILES AWAY.

distance below the plain, and at Cascade and Seal Rapids, though there are a number of smaller rapids. There is little green wood along this part of the river, the country here and around the northern part of Seal Lake having been burned over long ago. It is now grown up with poplar and white birch, from the midst of which the rocky hilltops rise bare and stern. A few small lake expansions occur, Wachesknipi being the largest. Here the country flattens out again to low sand ridges, and the river, bending a little to the south, enters Seal Lake.

From the northern extremity of the lake an arm, which, according to the trappers, is thirty miles long, extends away to the west. As far as we could see, the hills along its south shore drop abruptly to the river, like the Palisades of the Hudson. The course of the river is to the south, the lake contracting seven miles down to about three hundred yards in width, where perpendicular cliffs rise from the water edge and the current is very swift. The lake is surrounded by hills, the wildest and most rugged region being that about the outlet. It lies close to the edge of the plateau, and, from the point where the river leaves it, the water breaks into tossing rapids. From here to the northern extremity of Bald Mountain the river is still unexplored. According to the trappers, it rushes down a continuous rocky slope, the hills in places rising perpendicular from its edge.

Below the bend at Bald Mountain the direction of the river is southeast to Grand Lake. Its course lies mainly through sand hills and terraces, its banks varying from a few feet to sixty and eighty and one hundred feet in height. The valley is mostly well wooded with spruce and balsam as far as Mabelle Island, and here the spruce reaches splendid size. The trees are very tall and straight, and one I measured was nine feet in circumference. Below the island the country was swept by fire twenty-five years ago, and the new growth is still quite small. Among the hills Bald Mountain and Mts. Elizabeth and Sawyer are the most prominent features, being apparently more than a thousand feet in height. From Bald Mountain the rapids are continuous to Point Lucie, below Mt. Sawyer, the heaviest being North Pole and Three Mile Rapids. The remaining seventeen miles to Grand Lake is smooth water, though the current continues swift, and the river enters the lake around a number of small wooded islands, which entirely obscure it from the lake.

Grand Lake is forty miles long and four miles wide, and is very deep. It lies south of east among its hills, the highest and most striking of these being Berry Head on the north shore, and Porcu-

pine Hill, Cape Blanc, and Cape Corbeau on the south. From the eastern extremity of the lake a three-mile stretch of rapid river carries its waters to Lake Melville, where, together with those of the Grand or Hamilton, they pass northeast, entering the Atlantic north of the 54th parallel.

Throughout its length the Nascaupee receives tributaries of considerable size, on the upper river the principal contribution coming in from the north. Its waters are clear and cold, though some of the streams which enter it below Seal Lake are red brown water. On June 29<sup>t</sup> I found its shores at the foot of Three Mile Rapid lined with ice banks eight and ten feet thick, though above them violets were in bloom. On August 3<sup>rd</sup> we saw large masses of ice, like miniature bergs, floating in Lake Michikamau. Almost throughout the length of the river there was the border of tangled Arctic willows, which grow to a height of six and eight feet, and in many places broom birch covered its low drift islands and shores. On the islands of Lake Michikamau and some of its more exposed points the spruces were sometimes dwarfed and distorted by the storms; and farther north, about the Height of Land, where the country is flat and boggy, the wood growth consists mainly of tamarack with small spruce interspersed, many of the tall, slender tops of the former being completely bent over, telling of the rigours of the climate.

Standing on a slight elevation near the Height of Land, I had the feeling of being at the summit of the world. The country seemed to fall away, especially to north and south. The line of the horizon seemed too near to be natural, and there was more than the usual realizing sense of the great space between the earth and sky. This was emphasized by the lifting of a far-distant hilltop above the line, as if in an attempt to look across the divide.

The middle source of the George River is in Lake Hubbard, immediately north of the Height of Land, so that it may be accounted to take its rise in practically the same latitude and the same longitude as the Nascaupee. Its course is west of north, and for more than fifty miles it consists of a series of lake expansions of varying sizes, whose waters drop from one to another down shallow rapids. About the lakes the country is quite flat, low ridges beginning to appear as we passed northward. Five miles below Cabot Lake the east branch of the upper George comes in, a stream apparently almost equalling the middle river in volume, and twelve miles farther down the west branch, which drains Attikamagen Lake near the Height of Land to the southwest. Ten miles beyond Resolution Lake the river drops

FIG. 4.—ON THE TRAIL, UP-HILL WORK, NASCAUPE RIVER.

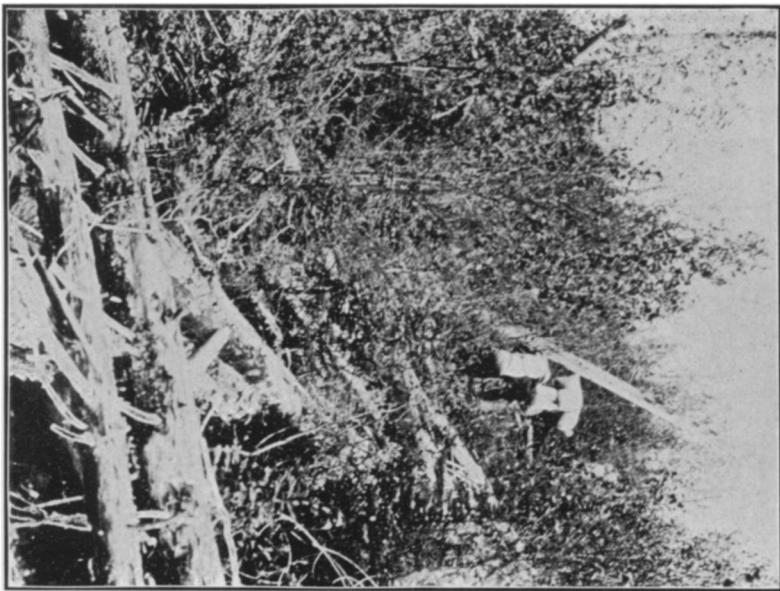
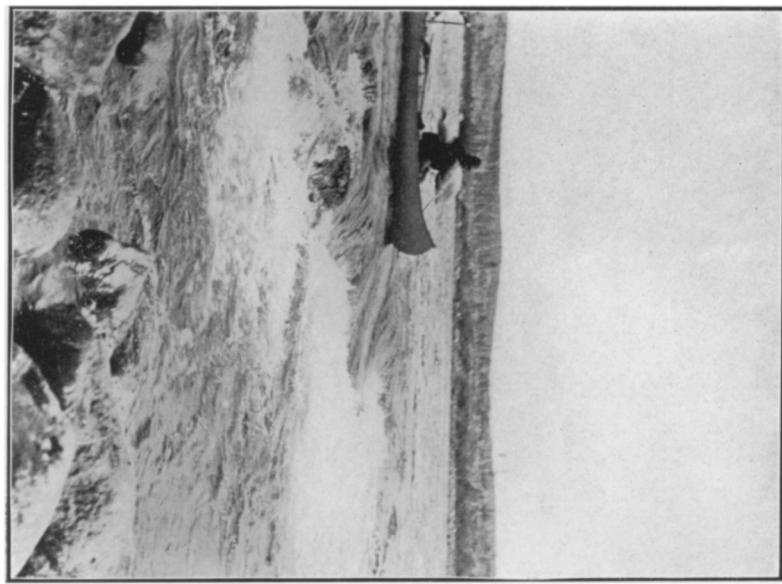


FIG. 7.—SHOOTING THE RAIDS, GEORGE RIVER



down through three rocky gorges at Cañon Camp, the lake expansions of the upper country are left behind, and the George River now flows with strong, swift current in a distinct valley. From a few miles below the camp the country is burned over, and is exceedingly desolate, the hills being barren even of reindeer moss. These hills become higher, till below Thousand Island Expansion they rise between six hundred and seven hundred feet above the river.

The river here flows for about two miles in falls and heavy rapids round islands of pink-and-white rock, beyond which the descent is less precipitate. In the next six miles two heavy rapids occur, at the second of which the river descends to flow between high sand banks, the hills standing back some distance from its shores, their broken faces red with a coating of iron rust. The intervening spaces are strewn with boulders of unusual size. Some miles below a large tributary comes in from the west, the river turns abruptly northward among the higher hills and spreads to the Barren Ground Water.

This expansion is somewhat more than fifty miles in length and from one to two wide. It is shut in on either side by high hills, which in places on the east shore rise abruptly from the water edge, but on the west usually stand a little back from the lake, the intervening spaces being filled in with sand. Long, high, wedge-shaped points of sand and loose rock reach out here and there from the west shore, which in places slopes back to the hills in high terraces, the highest more than one hundred and fifty feet above the lake. Streams fall in from either shore at short intervals, but throughout the length of the river by far the larger contribution comes in from the east.

From the foot of the lake the George begins a swift descent to Ungava, flowing for more than one hundred and thirty miles in almost continuous rapids. The slope of the river-bed is in many places like that of a steep grade; and as the water swings past the long points of loose rocks which reach out from either shore, there is not only the slope down the course of the river, but a distinct tilt from one side to the other, as when an engine rounds a bend. There are foaming breakers where the water flows over its boulder shallows; but again the river is so smooth as to seem almost motionless, even where the slope downward is distinctly perceptible. A few small expansions occur where the hills stand farther apart, and in places serpent-like sand ridges reach in from the hills on the west. River terraces occur, those opposite Pyramid Mountains being particularly well marked. One of the most characteristic features of

the lower river is the great wall of packed boulders thrown up by the action of the ice during the spring floods. Some of the rocks are of immense size, and usually the largest of them are found at the top. The wall varies in height from twenty feet at its beginning, thirty miles below the Barren Ground Water, to fifty and sixty feet farther down; and a short distance below our camp of August 24th a long bank of ice from three to four feet in thickness was still clinging to the boulders half way up from the water.

The country becomes more and more mountainous and rugged and barren. The wood growth, which is of spruce and larch, with, at intervals, a little balsam, is for some distance below Barren Ground Water rather more luxuriant than along the lake shores. At best it is but a narrow belt along the water, covering the hillsides to a height of perhaps two hundred feet, and dwindling gradually towards the north till in places it is absent altogether. The ridges on either side cross each other almost at right angles, turning the river now to the northeast, again to the northwest. Down the mountain sides broad bands of white show where the waters of numberless lakes and streams on the heights come tumbling down to join the river, and again a great gap in the solid mountain of rock lets through a rush of blue-green foaming water. The mountains on the right bank seem more rugged and irregular than those on the left, and Bridgman Mountains stand out to the river quite distinct and separate, like giant forts. The hills have the characteristic Cambrian outline; and it is the opinion of Mr. Low that this formation extends continuously eastward from the Kaniapiskau to the George.

Below Helen Falls the mountains spread in a wider sweep to the sea and the river gradually increases in width to its discharge into Ungava. Two heavy rapids occur below the limit of tidal influence which are obliterated at high water. At the foot of the lower of these there is forty feet of tide at the spring. In The Narrows beyond the post the outgoing water rushes in a long, smooth curve over an enormous boulder lying near the centre of the stream, to curl back in a great breaker the roar of which can be heard for miles. Ungava Bay has a spring tide of fifty feet, which at its rise fills the coves till below The Narrows the river is in places seven miles in width.

The game supply of the country traversed we did not find abundant, though it should be said no hunting was done off the route followed. On the lower Nascaupee our take consisted of a few porcupines, rabbits, partridges, and muskrats. There were signs of

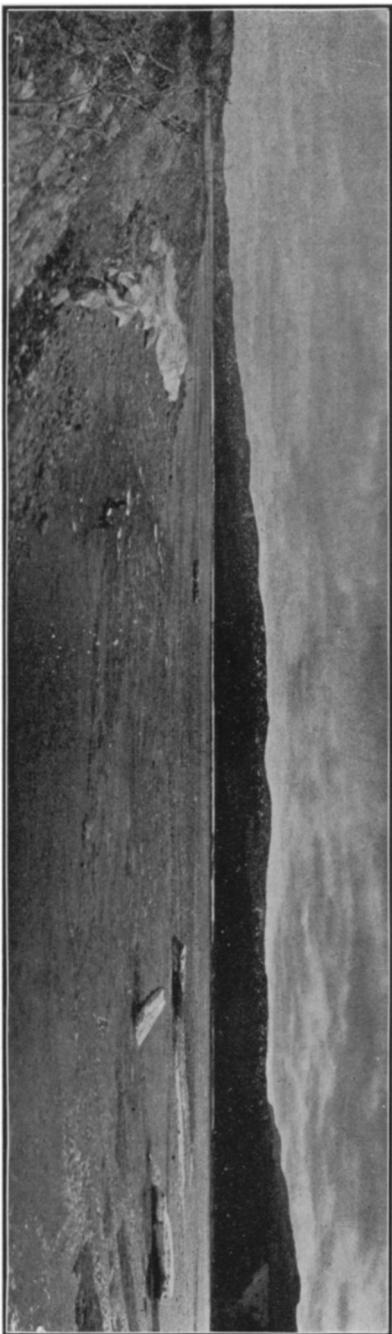


FIG. 6.—LOWER NASCAUPEE. SAND HILLS AND ICE BANKS.

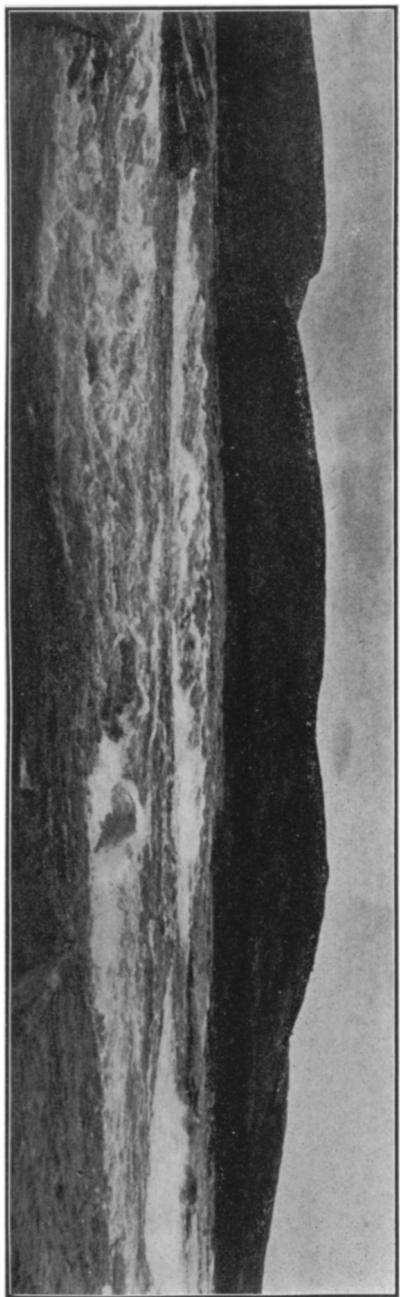


FIG. 8.—GEORGE RIVER RAPIDS AND MOUNTAINS.

beaver, marten, and otter, many bear trails, though we saw but one bear, a black one, and only once on the lower river did we see fresh caribou tracks. Seals played at the foot of Three Mile Rapid, and later we saw a number of them in Seal Lake and above Seal Rapid. On the upper river a few black ducks, Canada geese, spruce partridges, willow ptarmigan, were taken, and two days' journey above Seal Lake our first caribou.

On the west shore of Lake Michikamats, August 8th, we came upon the caribou migration, and saw one herd in which there were thousands. Though we did not again find them in such numbers, yet for fifty miles of our journey they were seen in smaller herds every day, and sometimes many times a day. They were in summer dress of pretty brown shading to grey and white on the under parts. The antlers were in velvet and of immense size, and males and females were already herding together. Apparently they had been in occupation of the country for some time. From Ptarmigan Point, on Lake Michikamats, to the head of Long Lake, on the George River, the country was a network of their trails, in the woodlands and bogs cut deep into the soil, on the barren hillsides broad, dark bands converging to the crossing-place at the river. North of the Height of Land we passed at intervals long piles of whitened antlers; and along the shore opposite our camp of August 15th, a broad band of white caribou hair, four feet above the river, told of their crossing and recrossing while shedding the winter coats.

Only once in passing this part of the country did we find trace of their enemy the wolf. Throughout the journey we did not see any, but once, while running down the lower George River, a lonely cry came down to us from one high up on the mountain side.

Through the caribou belt other game was more abundant also. Every day mother ducks with their flocks of little ones were seen, and a number of geese were taken. Gulls and loons were there in numbers, and ptarmigan were very plentiful as far as the head of the Barren Ground Water; but beyond, none were taken till we reached the post. Along the lower part of each of the rivers signs of foxes in large numbers were found, and the lemmings on which they feed made us not a little trouble. They were about in thousands, and the ground was so perforated with their holes as to remind one of a porous plaster.

In the lakes fish seem abundant, though we travelled too fast to do much fishing, and the nets were not once in the water. In the

lakes are the brook trout, ounaniche, and namaycush, some white fish, and in the lower George the sea trout and salmon.

The flowers are beautiful, though not so varied as in the home country. All along the Nascaupee blossoms of the Labrador tea filled the air with their fragrance, and pale laurel grew in abundance. Now and then we crossed great beds of blossoming cloudberries, and everywhere the star flower and bunchberry showed their white blossoms. One day, while ascending the Wapustan River, Gilbert handed me a dandelion, and during the day I saw several of them, but did not again find them throughout the journey. On the upper Nascaupee the dainty pink bells of the low cranberry showed in the carpet of glossy green, and near the water, along the low drift shores, the pink, almost rose-like, blossom of the dewberry. Violets grew on both rivers, but most beautiful of all was the twin flower, which I first found growing on the sandy terraces beyond the hill country west of Seal Lake. It was the delightful fragrance which first attracted my attention, and looking down I saw the long trailing vines from which the pink twin bells are lifted on slender, hair-like stems. It grows even more abundantly on the sandy shores of the George River, and at the post at Ungava masses of this beautiful flower, so rare and treasured here, creep along the foot of the mountain, while indoors, in a pot on the windowsill, Mrs. Ford, the agent's wife, carefully treasures two tiny clover plants, in her eagerness almost afraid to believe that they are really clover.

During the journey, which occupied the two months from June 27th to August 27th, the weather was wonderfully fine. There was not the continued downfall of rain nor any of the extreme heat, which told so heavily against Mr. Hubbard in 1903. We were in camp only eleven days on account of the rain, and the highest temperature reached was 77° F. in the shade. The lowest recorded temperature was 30° F., which was not, however, the minimum reached. As we passed into the higher lake country the clear nights were frosty, and on the morning of August 10th, at the northern extremity of Lake Michikamats, there was a coating of ice an eighth of an inch thick on a basin of water left outside the tent overnight. While descending the upper George my duffle was sometimes frozen stiff when I came to put it on in the morning; and on August 13th, 14th, and 15th we had snow flurries, as well as heavy rain and wind.

Thunderstorms were rare, and very mild as compared with those in the United States. On many days which were very beautiful there were passing showers, and Labrador is a land of rainbows. Nowhere have I ever seen their colours so brilliant or so variegated.

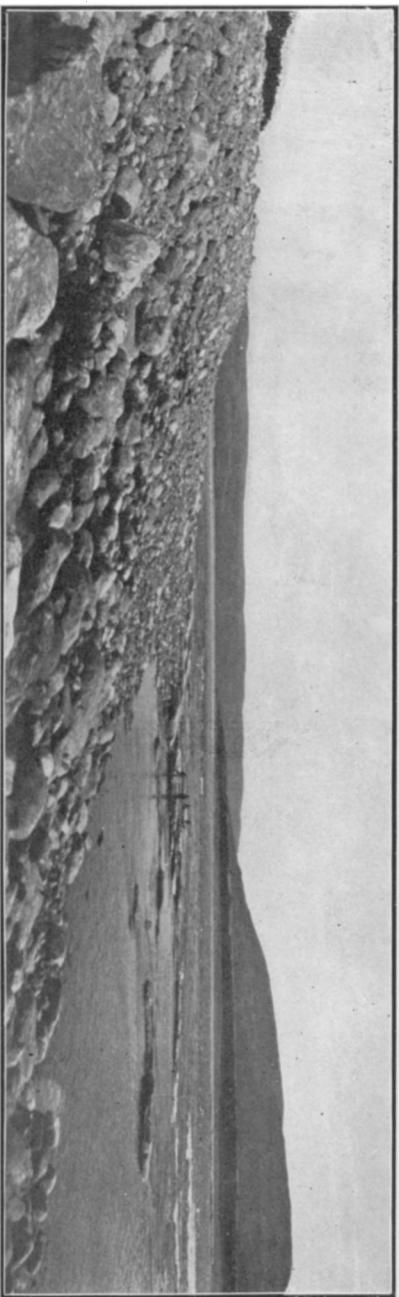


FIG. 9.—WALL 50 FEET HIGH ON LOWER GEORGE RIVER.

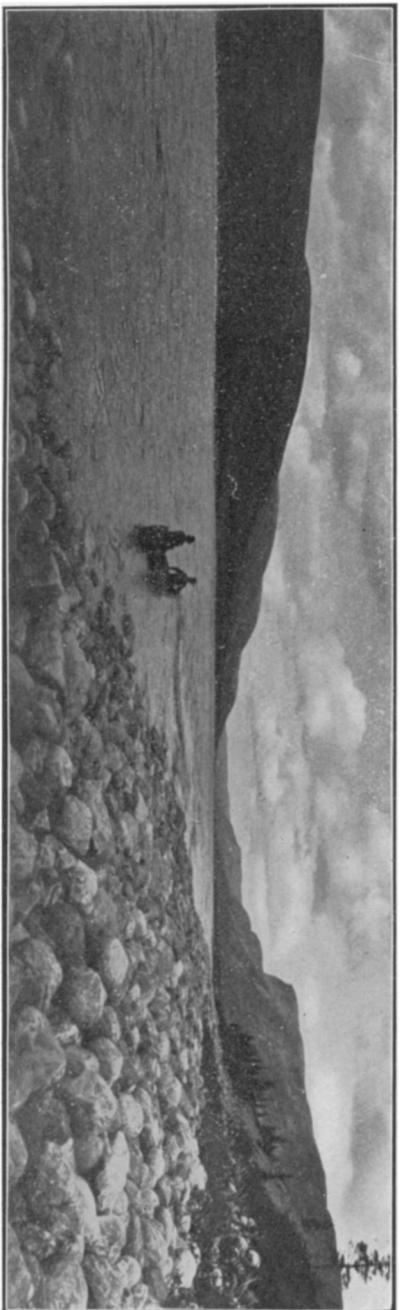


FIG. 10.—BRIDGMAN MOUNTAINS, LOWER GEORGE RIVER.



FIG. II.—CARIBOU TRAIL, PTARMIGAN POINT, LAKE MICHIKAMATS.

manifested. They did not always appear in the form of a bow, and once I saw them lie like a beautiful veil along the whole length of Rainbow Hill on the upper Nascaupee. There was a wonderful clearness in the atmosphere, which made landmarks miles away seem very near and clothed the far-distant hills with colour indescribably beautiful. In the blue of the hills and the waters and the sky there was a peculiar silveriness, which, with the white of the reindeer moss and the dark green of the spruce forests, touched in places with tender green of the white birch and poplar, made a combination of colour which I think can scarcely be surpassed in beauty anywhere in the world. In a way which I could neither describe nor understand, it was comforting.

The flies and mosquitoes, for which the country is famed, did not wholly fail of accomplishing their dire designs upon us; but their ravages are easily forgotten in the remembrance of the beauties of that lone land which can smile with so much grace, even though its mood has sometimes been one of such persistent cruelty.

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## IMPRESSIONS OF A NATURALIST IN BRITISH GUIANA.

BY

PROF. ANGELO HEILPRIN.

When in 1825 Charles Waterton published his delightful "Wanderings in South America" he gave to the world the first picture of what Anthony Trollope has called the "true and actual Utopia of the Caribbean Seas, namely, British Guiana." In it we have presented one of the most fascinating introductions to a region of charm and beauty—an impression of nature which is scintillant with the glories of the field and forest, that mocks, however rudely, the labour of the systematist and cabinet, that invites to hidden secrets in a largely unknown world. The "Wanderings in South America" has doubtless been to many one of the earliest books of travel to inspire, and it has always seemed to me to be the impelling force which through many years has held up the vision of a journey to the great primeval forest of the south. Therefore, to its author *nominatim* I surrender "a certain portion of the honours" that may come to me from my recent and exceedingly modest journey; for, as he says, "As Ulysses sent Achilles to Troy, so I sent him to Guiana."